

Tribe fencing returns
Following last semester's tragedy, the College carries on in the spirit of its fallen coach and teammate.
See FENCING page 10



Driving William and Mary
The newly revamped Steer Clear provides an amusing option for nighttime transportation.
See STEER CLEAR page 8

The Flat Hat

The twice-weekly student newspaper of the College of William and Mary ♦ Est. 1911

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FLATHATNEWS.COM

BOV to meet with students

Powell, other members plan to discuss reasons for Nichol's non-renewal

BY SAM SUTTON
Flat Hat Staff Writer

Rector Michael Powell and members of the Board of Visitors plan to visit campus this week to answer questions and concerns regarding the recent resignation of former College President Gene Nichol.

"I think we have talked to a lot of students, faculty and staff," Powell said in an interview Monday. "I hope that it's a good dialogue."

Powell went on to say that although there was no defining moment when the BOV members chose not to renew Nichol's contract, a general consensus had been reached before the end of their meeting Feb. 7, before three BOV members met with members of the House of Delegates to discuss the College's recent controversies.

In a campus-wide e-mail sent out Friday, Powell announced the creation of a website that provides students, faculty and staff the chance to submit questions and comments that BOV members will answer at the meeting. Powell added that he and the other BOV members have an understanding of the most persistent questions, given



FILE PHOTO — THE FLAT HAT
Rector Powell

See MEETING page 3

BOV BACKLASH



ALEX GUILLÉN — THE FLAT HAT

Students marched around campus Thursday protesting the BOV's decision not to renew Nichol's contract. Students split off to spread fliers at each building.

Graffiti vandals hit Wren

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Flat Hat News Editor

The Wren Building is the site of yet another controversy this week after anti-Board of Visitors graffiti was discovered on the building Saturday morning.

Campus Police have also confirmed that similar graffiti has been found on a total of nine locations at the College, including Tyler Hall, Swem Library and the new Laycock Football Center.

According to Louise Kale, the executive director of the College's

historic campus, the graffiti was likely applied Friday night using spray paint and stenciled letters.

The stencils on the Wren Building read "No more board of dictators" and "BOV Visit This," which also portrayed a black hand with a raised middle finger.

Kale said that she does not know if students were involved in the vandalism.

"It is a disappointment, particularly in light of the responsible way the students were expressing themselves last week," Kale said. "The conversation was civil last week and I thought

fairly constructive."

In a campus-wide e-mail yesterday, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Ginger Ambler said that she was "disheartened" and "shocked" by the vandalism. She also said that Campus Police were conducting an investigation into the graffiti.

"I urge a return to the civil discourse that characterized our campus' response last week," she said.

The vandalism comes after a week of peaceful protest in response to former College President Gene Nichol's resignation last Tuesday.



BRIAN MAHONEY — THE FLAT HAT

Vandals sprayed this anti-Board of Visitors graffiti on a column outside Tyler Hall.

RACE AND THE COLLEGE: PART THREE OF FOUR

College integrated in 1951

Willis '56, first black student, earned education degree

By KEIRSTIN FLYTHE
Flat Hat Staff Writer

Three years before the landmark Brown v. Board of Education ruling made segregation unconstitutional, Hulon Willis Sr. enrolled at the College as its first black student.

According to Lisa L. Heuvel's September 1985 article in The Alumni Gazette, Willis visited the College with his wife, Alyce, in 1945 and "fell in love" with it.

"I was going through the Wren Building and thought what a great thing it would be to matriculate there," Willis said. "I never dreamed it would happen."

But his dream did come true. March 22, 1951, he was accepted into the school of education and became the first black person to enroll at the College. Although he enrolled during a time when the majority of the United States was segregated, Willis did not have anything negative to say about his experience at the College.

"William and Mary is tops in my book. It always has been and always will be," he said. "The students didn't accept all things about [my enrollment], but I wasn't there for that ... I was there to get an education, and my background as a Virginia State undergraduate was good. I was never under great pressure

at William and Mary, although a lot of people were concerned for me."

According to the Virginia State University Orientation Office, Willis received a Bachelor of Science degree in health and physical education from Virginia State University, an historically black college, in 1949. He also taught in the Norfolk public school system for some time before beginning his studies at the College.

Willis commented that his professors treated him fairly. "They could have set up roadblocks for me, but they didn't," he said.

Some black students were offended by the idea of attending an institution that was so tied to Williamsburg, where there was a

strong history of slavery.

"Some things you have to go above and beyond," Willis said. "That was one of those times, and it still doesn't take anything away from the history and prestige of William and Mary."

In 1956, Willis graduated from the College, receiving a master's degree in education. He then went on to be an assistant professor of health and physical education, as well as coaching wrestling and directing campus police at VSU.

Willis was also a member of the Parent's Association Steering Committee at the College during the years his two children attended. His son, Hulon Willis Jr., graduated from the College in 1977, while his daughter Kimberly Willis studied at the College for three years before going elsewhere to finish her degree in 1980. This made the Willises family the first black generational family of the College.

After Willis's death June 13, 1989, a group of black alumni, which was in the process of starting an association for black graduates of the College, named its organization in honor of Willis, according to the Dec. 7, 1989, article in the Progress-Index. Willis' son hoped that "the association will strengthen black participation in William and Mary's alumni activities."

The association went on to establish the Hulon Willis Sr. Memorial Scholarship Endowment to give financial support to minority students at the College.

Reveley asks for more funds

Interim president lobbies Richmond for salary increases

By BRIAN MAHONEY
Flat Hat News Editor

The Virginia House Appropriations and Senate Finance committees released recommendations yesterday for the commonwealth's colleges and universities in their 2008-2010 biennial budgets.

"There is much to be resolved before the General Assembly adjourns early next month," Interim College President Taylor Reveley said in an e-mail to students yesterday. "We will continue to remind our representatives in Richmond that these additional funds matter very much to the College."

Gov. Timothy Kaine, the Virginia House of Delegates and the Virginia Senate all released separate budget proposals, which included recommendations for faculty salaries and student financial aid, among others. The budget's effects on the College were released in Reveley's e-mail yesterday, and prepared by the College's Vice President for Finance Sam Jones.

Both the House and the Senate recommended increases in faculty and staff salaries for fiscal year 2009, by 2 and 2.5 percent respectively. The Governor's budget recommended no increase until fiscal year 2010, which contained a 3 percent increase.

The governor also recommended increasing undergraduate need-based student aid by \$74,059 through 2010. Both the



FILE PHOTO — THE FLAT HAT
Pres. Reveley

See BUDGET page 4

NEWSINSIGHT

The Flat Hat

‘Stabilitas et Fides’

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In last Friday’s news article, “Faculty meets to discuss president,” The Flat Hat mistakenly credited the photo to Spencer Atkinson. The photographer was John Quinn.

Weather

Tuesday



High 59°
Low 35°

Wednesday



High 59°
Low 28°

Thursday



High 43°
Low 34°

Source: www.weather.com

Quote of the Week

“It is a disappointment, particularly in light of the responsible way the students were expressing themselves last week.”
— Executive director of the College’s historic campus Louise Kale on the recent vandalism around campus.
See page 1

News in Brief

Professor selected as finalist for dean position at Oberlin

College history and American studies Professor Kimberly Phillips was selected as one of three finalists in the search to find a new dean of arts and sciences at Oberlin College in Ohio. This past week, the three finalists, including Phillips, visited the campus in order to answer questions from the students at the college.

The other two candidates include Jeremy Teitelbaum, senior associate dean for the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Sean Decatur, associate dean of faculty for science at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts.

The new dean will be selected within the next couple of weeks and will take office in July.

College student awarded third in scholarship program

College student Angela Perkey ’08 was recently selected as one of the winners in the All-USA Today College All-Star competition. The competition, which celebrates its 19th year this February, annually awards 20 undergraduate students for outstanding academics and service to the general public. All winners are recognized nationwide in an issue of USA Today and are awarded \$2,500 in scholarship money.

Perkey was selected for the third team of winners this year for founding non-profit organization Student Serve, which provides grant and scholarship aid to students around the country for service-based projects.

Other winners include West Point student Rajiv Srinivasan, who raised \$150,000 for public schools and Ohio State University student Joshua Lotz, who is currently researching the chemistry of herbal remedies of China and Tibet.

— By Isshin Teshima

By the Numbers

The following are percentages of undergraduates at the College who list certain books as their favorite on Facebook.

19.6 percent

1,141 undergraduates list “Harry Potter.”

7.4 percent

428 undergraduates list “Pride and Prejudice.”

6.4 percent

368 undergraduates list the Bible.

6.1 percent

357 undergraduates list “1984.”

5.5 percent

319 undergraduates list “Lord of the Rings.”

— by Maxim Lott



COURTESY PHOTO — WIKIPEDIA COMMONS
Michigan’s state financial loan program recently lost funding due to the current lending crisis.

BEYOND THE BURG
Michigan cancels student loan program

State government claims bad national economy at fault

By SARAH HAYS
Assoc. Flat Hat Insight Editor

The Michigan state government has suspended one of its college loan programs in response to the credit crunch that the country is currently facing. The Michigan Alternative Student Loan Program, or MI-LOAN, is no longer accepting applications due to its inability to secure capital for such loans.

In a statement made Feb. 13, Deputy State Treasurer Tom Saxton said that the problem is rooted in an inability to issue long-term, fixed-rate bonds in an amount sufficient to fund the MI-LOAN program.

In the past week, the agency’s website has posted a statement concerning the temporary suspension of the program: “Due to the current and unprecedented capital markets disruption, there is not sufficient available capital to continue making MI-LOANS. After considerable

analysis and significant efforts to secure sufficient capital to make new MI-LOANS, the difficult decision to temporarily suspend MI-LOANS had to be made.”

Consequently, students who currently hold MI-LOANS, or who finalized their loans before Feb. 15, will not be negatively affected by the change; however, students seeking to renew their MI-LOANS will have to look elsewhere for assistance. The effects of the suspension are not expected to be felt this semester, but may be quite significant this coming summer and fall.

Founded in 1990, the MI-LOAN program provides funds that are often used as bridge loans to help meet college costs not covered by other sources. It benefits students who would not typically qualify for federal aid programs. The loans vary in term, and borrowers must begin paying it back within 60 days

after the first disbursement.

Last year, the program gave out approximately 8,500 loans of varying amounts, totaling \$68 million, to Michigan university students. More than 100 Michigan colleges and universities are participants in the program.

For many, the fate of this program is a disconcerting reminder of the current state of the lending market. It remains to be seen what impact the market will have upon student loans nationwide.

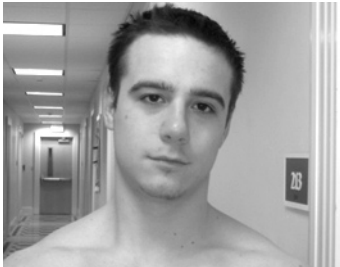
Mark Boulus, executive director of the Presidents Council, a group representing Michigan’s public university presidents, expressed some of the financial frustration many public higher education institutions are facing.

“It’s just a crazy financial market right now. It caught us by surprise, but maybe it shouldn’t be a surprise,” he said.

STREET BEAT
Who should be the next president of the College?



Sam Sadler, I miss his e-mails.



[Economics] Professor Mitchell Dudley.



Taylor Reveley, because of his great leadership from the law school.

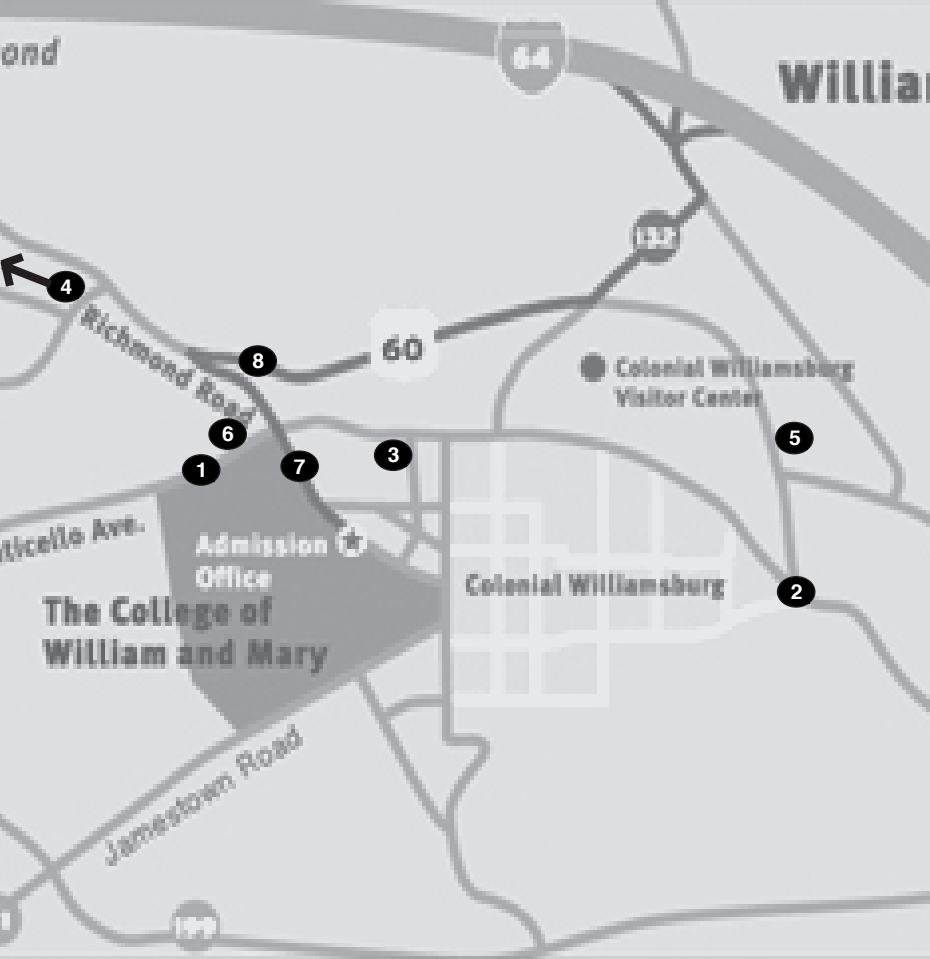


[Government] Professor Larry Evans.

Robert Lawrence ’11 Matt Olesiak ’11 Alexandrina Maccabee ’10 Walter McClean ’09

— photos and interviews by Beau Blumberg

CITY POLICE BEAT
Feb. 12 to Feb. 18



Tuesday, Feb. 12 —A white male was arrested at the intersection of Monticello Avenue and South Mt. Vernon Avenue for driving under the influence for the third time and for refusal to submit to a field sobriety test. **1**

Friday, Feb. 15 —A black male was arrested at the intersection of York Street and Page Street for driving with a suspended license. **2**

Saturday, Feb. 16 —A black male was arrested on the 400 block of Harriet Tubman Drive for grand larceny of a vehicle, eluding police, driving with a suspended license for the second time and reckless driving. **3**

— A white male was arrested on the 1800 block of Richmond Road for being drunk in public. **4**

Sunday, Feb. 17 —A black female was arrested on Capitol Landing Road for assault. **5**

— A black male was arrested at Monticello Shopping Center for a second DUI offense. **6**

— A white male was arrested on the 1000 block of Richmond Road for being drunk in public. **7**

— Two black females were arrested on the 1800 block of Richmond Road for assault. Minor injuries were sustained by both women. **4**

Monday, Feb. 18 — A black male was arrested on the 100 block of Bypass Road for a second DUI offense, refusal to submit to a field sobriety test and driving with a suspended license. **8**

— Compiled by Sarah Hays

Former College coach advocates Kenyan reform

Volleyball coach Debbie Hill speaks with students after experiencing post-election violence



COURTESY — DEBBIE HILL
Hill and her partner returned to their favorite supermarket only to find it destroyed by the violence.

By WAYNE PEARSON
The Flat Hat

One would think that, after three decades as Tribe volleyball coach, Debbie Hill would want a peaceful retirement.

But “peaceful” is not the word one would use to describe Kenya

this winter, where Hill recently traveled as a volunteer for the Maasai American Organization, a Non-Governmental Organization that aims to develop communities among the Maasai, one of the country’s many ethnic groups.

In late December, violence in Kenya’s capital Nairobi erupted

after disputed elections brought ethnic tension to the forefront.

Hill, a recently retired College volleyball coach, was in Nairobi a few days after the election, just as the violence began to spread.

Hill and Buchanan witnessed firsthand the destruction of the people of Kenya when they went

to visit their favorite supermarket and found that the building had been completely demolished by fire and looting. Many similar incidents have occurred in other regions of Kenya where different tribes are fighting for domination. The newly elected president has yet to undertake any actions to resolve the issues.

Violence has been rampant since incumbent President Mwai Kibaki faced challenger Raila Odinga. While Odinga held a significant lead through most of the vote tallying, Kibaki was ultimately awarded the victory by the Electoral Commission. Experts speculated that corruption was a major part of the electoral process, and could not indicate a clear winner. Just hours later, members of the Luos tribe, supporters of Odinga, took to the streets in protest. While the protests were peaceful initially, they quickly became violent in nature, with Luos attacking members of the Kikuyu tribe, supporters of Kibaki. Kikuyus then began to engage in violence with Luos. The consequences of the slow shift from a political to an ethnic battle

have been devastating, with events leading to instability within the country and over 1,000 deaths.

The Massai are a rural tribe that is, for the most part, removed from the violence within the country. This trip was the second of the year for Hill — as making the trip to Kenya has become a biannual event for Hill and her partner Dr. Camilla Buchanan. On these trips, Hill and Buchanan work on community development focusing on health and education. In order to promote more healthy lifestyles, MAO has drilled for wells, refurbished clinics and completed numerous water projects. The MAO also promotes education through school construction, scholarships and introducing education to the female population. While the MAO continued to make progress in developing the Massai community on the most recent trip, the turbulence in Kenya did not go unnoticed.

When Buchanan and Hill returned to America, they felt the urge to speak of the terrors they experienced. Mary Kanani ’08, a College student from Kenya,

provided much insight regarding the tribal division that greatly influences current events. Kibaki is part of the privileged Kikuyu ethnic group, which makes up about 20 percent of the population. The Kikuyus have many problems with the other prominent ethnic group in Kenya, the Luos. The situation between the two has escalated because the two ethnic groups have different political aims, and the recently rigged elections angered both.

“People were believing in the political process,” Kanani said. “They believed in democracy.”

The election was highly publicized with high voter turnout, but the rigging of the election has led many Kenyans to lose faith in the government. A majority of the elected officials are crooked and openly steal from the government — factors of the underlying issues.

Despite these problems, many believe the conflict can be resolved.

“We can support Kenyans in the desire to bring resolution,” Kanani said.

‘Derby Days’ stirs controversy, ire

By ANDY GARDEN
Flat Hat Staff Writer

Complaints about fraternity Sigma Chi’s Derby Days philanthropy have led to discussions with the Inter-Sorority Council and leaders of the fraternity.

Derby Days is a week-long national philanthropy and is one of the largest in the country, according to Sigma Chi Philanthropy Chair Spencer Tawse ’10.

Derby Days is “a competition between different sororities or groups of girls to support the Children’s Miracle Network,” Tawse said. CMN is a non-profit organization that funds hospitals and medical research.

Competitions at Derby Days include creating banners, performing skits and lip-syncing.

The philanthropy became the source of some controversy this year when the ISC received complaints from females about Derby Days, ranging from the setting to the tasks assigned. Respondents to an ISC survey said that the philanthropy “is degrading to women who are judged by men of a fraternity” and is designed “to impress members of Sigma Chi.”

In response to the complaints, Tawse and Sigma Chi’s president Jonathan Anderson ’08 and former president Bryan McDermott ’07 met with the ISC to go over the complaints and the ISC’s proposals.

Tawse said that he knew of the problems with Derby Days when he signed on as Sigma Chi philanthropy chair.

“The previous philanthropy chair had worked on bringing Derby Days back to what it had been,” Tawse said. “I had come

into this position with the goal to [continue] that.”

Tawse said that the ISC meetings were highly successful and that Sigma Chi and ISC worked out solutions to most of the issues discussed.

The ISC report indicated that murky scoring were a problem for many participants, who felt that Sigma Chi may have been awarding points based on criteria not in their guidelines. More than 75 percent of respondents also felt that the non-public venue for Derby Days’ activities “encouraged inappropriate behavior.”

In response, Tawse told The Flat Hat that many of the changes recommended by the ISC would be implemented.

“A lot of the recommendations were really simple, like a public scoreboard,” he said. Sigma Chi is now planning to hold the lip-sync performance as a concert in Lodge One.

To address complaints that participants were unsure of where the money for Derby Days was going, the first day of the competition will feature a presentation by the Children’s Miracle Network, Tawse said.

In addition, Tawse said he was happy with the ISC meetings and expects Derby Days to be a success this year.

“I think everyone came out of that meeting excited for Derby Days,” he said. “We feel like we have an opportunity to come out [of] this with a better philanthropy.”

BOV to meet with students on campus

MEETING *from page 1*

the e-mails and phone calls received last week.

Nichol’s resignation sparked controversy at the College last week, with many students and faculty staging protests. The protestors generated a list of demands, including that Powell and members of the BOV hold a public meeting to explain their reasoning behind their decision.

Powell did send out an e-mail soon after Nichol’s resignation became public to redress people’s concerns. However, to many, this was not enough.

“While we understand Mr. Powell’s rush to get a message out, a single e-mail cannot serve as the sole comment for a decision that has had such a dramatic effect on our College community,” Student Assembly President Zach Pilchen ’09 said in an e-mail last week. He

requested Powell and the BOV answer questions in person on campus.

According to Powell, no format or formal date for the meeting has been established yet, but that he would like to talk to people in whatever manner is most conducive to a good dialogue, he said. He went on to say that at least he, BOV Secretary Suzann Matthews and five other members of the BOV would be at the meeting.

“This is a victory,” Annie Brown ’10, a leader of the demonstrations, said. “If he’s willing to come here and give us a voice and change the process, we’ve won.”

Pilchen declined to comment. College spokesman Brian Whitson confirmed that no “specific details” of the BOV’s visits have been established yet.

Secretary to the BOV Michael could not be reached for comment.

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WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

I'm Not There (R)
Tues., Feb. 19-Thurs., Feb. 21
6:30 and 9 p.m.
Feb. 20 screening room (35 seats)

Starting Out in the Evening (PG-13)
Tues., Feb. 19-Sun., Feb. 24
6:45 and 8:45 p.m.
Feb. 19, 21-24 screening room (35 seats)

Coming Attraction...

**The Virginia Peninsula Jewish Film Festival
On Merchants Square**
Bad Faith Not rated
Sat., Feb. 23-Sun., Feb. 24
7 and 8:45 p.m.

Live Performances...

**The Kimball Theatre presents
Xiayin Wang in Concert**
Fri., Feb. 22 at 8 p.m.
General admission \$20, Seniors/Students \$18

Mrs. Virginia United States 2008 Pageant
Sat., Mar. 1 at 6 p.m.
Tickets will be available on the evening of the Pageant in the Kimball Theatre lobby:
Adults \$30, Children under 12 \$20
(children under 5 are free)


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CAMPUS PROTESTS



ALEX GUILLÉN — THE FLAT HAT
Provost Geoff Feiss speaks with environmental science Professor Mark Fowler at a protest Thursday.



ALEX GUILLÉN — THE FLAT HAT
Economics Professor Robert Archibald addresses the Arts and Sciences faculty.

House recommends budget

BUDGET from page 1

House and the Senate agreed with these recommendations. The governor also recommended an “annual general fund reduction” of \$3.4 million for the College. This was a 2 percent increase to this year’s \$3 million reduction. The House rejected this reduction, and recommended that the state cut a total of approximately \$2.5 million from the College’s budget. The

House also supported the Higher Education Tuition Moderation Incentive Fund, which would return \$715,000 to the College in 2009 if in-state tuition rates remain at current levels. Currently, in-state fees are \$4,582 per semester. The College also received \$200,000 for research. The governor, the House and the Senate all agreed to fully fund the College’s new school of education at a cost of \$38.1 million.

Under the
MICROSCOPE

Mike Harper
FLAT HAT SCIENCE COLUMNIST



The College will host two science symposia this week: the Neuroscience Symposium, which features two faculty presentations and a keynote speaker; and the Undergraduate Science Research Symposium, which features student visual and oral presentations. The keynote speaker for the Neuroscience Symposium is Dr. Mary Lou Pardue, an alumna of the College and a professor of biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As the Boris Magasanik Professor of Biology at MIT, Pardue researches the structural elements of chromosomes. Her research focuses on telomeres — the end regions of chromosomes that protect against degradation and are involved in the development of cancer and the aging process. Her contributions to biology will win her an audience with the science crowd, but her adventure-seeking attitude and her emphasis on the importance of energetic mentors will give her keynote address general appeal as well. Pardue has pursued many eclectic research experiences, from the cornfields of Virginia Tech to Oak Ridge National Laboratory of Tennessee. She says that she was never interested in following a narrow career path. She applied and was accepted to graduate schools, but this was a last resort. She had never seen a woman with a Ph.D. holding a job in which she was interested, so grad school was not enticing. As a lab tech, Pardue worked in whatever lab she

found most exciting, and so pursued research in several different master’s fields with various labs. After several years, she decided to pursue her Ph.D. at Yale, but she still did not consider becoming a professor. After obtaining her doctorate in biology, she did post-doctoral work in Edinburgh, and then became a professor at MIT. This synopsis, however, does not convey the depth of her contributions to science at each point in her career. While at Yale, for example, she developed the technique of “in situ” hybridization, or ISH. ISH is a process in which labeled Deoxyribonucleic Acid or Ribonucleic Acid fragments are used to locate genes on chromosomes, or to determine which cells and tissues in an organism express certain proteins. Labeled DNA strands, called probes, locate sections on chromosomes by binding to the complementary base sequences. Labeled RNA probes also bind to complementary sequences, but they indicate protein expression by binding to messenger RNA — templates for proteins. ISH is the fundamental technique for many gene expression experiments. The Neuroscience Symposium at which Pardue will speak will take place Wednesday, Feb. 20, from 3 to 5:30 p.m. in the University Center Tidewater. The keynote address begins at 4 p.m. The Undergraduate Science Research Symposium is an annual event, and the largest showcase of undergraduate research at the College. All sciences are represented, so it is an opportunity not only for students to present the results of their experiments but also to become interested in research. The USRS will take place Friday, Feb. 22, from 1 to 5 p.m. Posters will be on display in the UC Tidewater from 1 to 4 p.m., and oral presentations will take place in the James, York and Colony Rooms between 1 and 5 p.m.

Nichol, family at N.C. beach

By RUSS ZERBO
Flat Hat Staff Writer

Former College President Gene Nichol has been keeping a low profile, and his communications have been scarce. He said in an e-mail to The Flat Hat that he and his family

have been at their North Carolina beach house, where he is staying out of the commotion that has overtaken campus since his resignation a week ago. He described his family’s state as “well, if still, brokenhearted.” He said that he has received approximately 3,000 e-mails from

students, faculty and alumni. “They have meant a great deal to us, but it’ll take a while to respond,” he said. “We’re beginning to prepare for the next phase of our lives.” Nichol is expected to return to the College next week to gather his belongings.

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STAFF EDITORIAL

Replacing Nichol

Some may be hesitant to discuss the question of who should lead the College in the wake of former President Gene Nichol’s resignation. They may argue that the talk is premature.

It is never too early. The Board of Visitors has already started to search for the next president, and students who want to be heard should voice their opinions sooner rather than later. Many on campus will point to Nichol-like qualities that the new president should have — dynamic, charismatic, present at football games and campus events. While we would welcome a president as involved on campus as Nichol, the BOV’s first task should be to find a competent manager to excel in the important areas, such as fundraising and public relations, in which Nichol failed.

In the recent past, the BOV has awarded the top spot to men with impressive resumes, most of them graduates of the Ivy League or of the College. If the history of our small school has demonstrated one truth, however, it is that the next president, all other strengths aside, must be able to build the endowment.

Interim President Taylor Reveley’s role will be an important one in the coming year. He has stepped in at a most crucial time: the time to make amends. Ensuring continued and renewed support from the College’s top donors will be paramount in the coming months. And for the remainder of the school year, responding to more immediate concerns from faculty, alumni and students will require open ears and a deft hand.

In the longer term, we remain most concerned with a new president’s ability to bolster the College’s finances. While there may be something noble about persevering in the face of destitution, other schools aren’t lining up to join in this perennial struggle of

While we would welcome a president as involved on campus as Nichol, the BOV’s first task should be to find a competent manager.

ours. Currently, the College’s endowment ranks above that of just two other schools in our peer group of 17 universities, and financial aid plans like the Gateway Initiative are still lacking necessary dollars.

The recent 6.5 percent state budget cut only reinforces the

necessity of raising private money to fund all programs in the years to come. A president who can foster excellent relations with donors — not only alumni contributing to the general endowment, but also those desiring to fund specific chairs and programs — will be a president who leads the College in the appropriate direction.

Of course, we aren’t advocating the selection of a fundraising automaton, either.

Top executives should relate to the members of their organizations, as well. The past two presidents displayed occasional difficulty in adapting to this demand, first in Timothy J. Sullivan’s lukewarm relationship with faculty and then in Gene Nichol’s struggles to cooperate with the BOV.

A candidate who has invested the time in a collegiate environment to complete a Ph.D. (as opposed to a J.D., like recent presidents), may be better suited as the leader of a school with international research aspirations. A president who is a respected academician with extensive administrative experience could push for improved research funding and relate well with Arts and Sciences faculty, the lifeblood of the College.

At all costs, we must avoid a micromanager, whose policies could bring the College further controversy. The past three years have taught us the value to be gained from an executive’s judicious application of restraint — we hope the next president will practice sound judgment and maintain a focus on the College’s top missions.

Among those missions has been the increasing diversification of the campus community. The board would be wise to consider a diverse array of candidates for the presidency, including women and minorities.

The perfect president could perhaps excel equally in every area, but at this particular juncture, the College most needs someone who will promote a scholarly atmosphere on campus and raise the funds we so desperately need. If the state cannot spare the money, then we must require our next president be the person to find those who can and will.

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The Flat Hat welcomes submissions to the Opinions section. Letters to the Editor may be no longer than 250 words and Opinions columns no longer than 700 words. Submissions should be e-mailed to opinions@flathatnews.com no later than 5 p.m. Sunday for publication the following Tuesday and 5 p.m. Wednesday for the following Friday. The Flat Hat reserves the right to edit all material. Due to space constraints, The Flat Hat may not publish all submissions. All staff editorials reflect the position of The Flat Hat. Letters, columns, graphics and cartoons reflect the view of the author only.

Kalyani Phansalkar
FLAT HAT STAFF COLUMNIST



Alma mater hail!

These words resonated through Old Campus and up the stairs to the second floor of Brown Hall last week. One thing was for sure — my roommate and I were in our pajamas busy reading for cancelled classes. The night of former College President Gene Nichol’s resignation, we excused ourselves from being in the front of his house because it was too cold outside or because we were a little sick or because we were already too comfortable.

If I had wanted to protest, however, my red checkered pajamas would not have stopped me. It’s not that I hate

Nichol, I guess, but I don’t love him either.

I care very much about the future of the College and the decisions made by the administration. I have been kept well informed about recent happenings by my professors and fellow classmates, but somehow, I have failed to forge a strong opinion of Nichol and his presidency.

When I read Nichol’s e-mail Tuesday morning, I was touched by everything he had to say and by everything he had done for the College. His constant encouragement for diversity and increase in financial aid for low-income families was noble. I was especially disappointed with the monetary offer made by the Board of Visitors; I found it shameful. Later that day at dinner, conversations, debates and arguments about Nichol flourished across the tables at the University

Center. I felt as if I was part of a new nightlife in Williamsburg: the hub of controversy and scandal.

I also discussed the matter with an upperclassman who was in complete favor of Nichol’s resignation. He murmured through his pasta, “You know,

With the craziness of my first semester freshman year, I completely overlooked Nichol, his policies and the repercussions they might bring upon the College.

Nichol lost this College more than \$10 million dollars. With him as president, the alumni refuse to donate to any of the College funds.”

I had known that. But at that point, this fact seemed more blaring

than ever. And I thought to myself, “Well, it’s a good thing he’s gone.” Throughout that day and for the rest of the week, I felt as if I was taking on the opinions and reasoning of everyone around me. I would be convinced by the person I was talking to right at that moment.

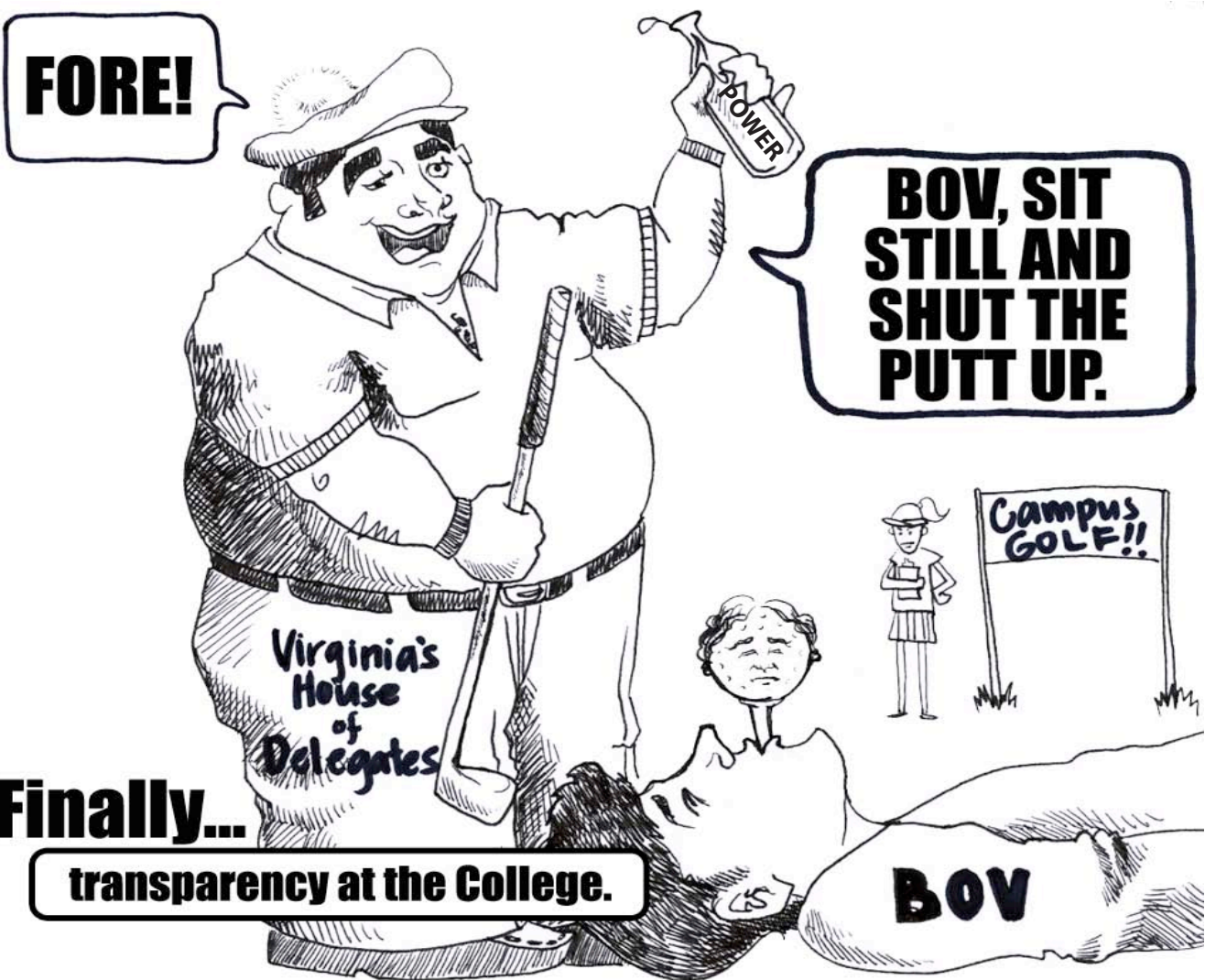
Why am I not feeling anything? It’s not apathy — I do care enough to have an opinion. I realized, then, that the reason why I am failing so miserably at making up my mind is because I never really formed an opinion of Nichol on my own. He helped carry my bags up to my room during Orientation and, the next thing I knew, he resigned. With the craziness of my first semester freshman year, I completely overlooked Nichol, his policies and the repercussions they might bring upon the College.

And, all of a sudden, I’m being

bombarded with opinions, concerns and questions from passionate upper-classmen and teary-eyed professors, but all that I can think of is whether class will be canceled again. It’s really bad, I know. But, it’s true. I don’t want to lie to myself and stand out there wearing a bright yellow shirt when I don’t completely believe in the cause behind it.

Even though I’m still a little confused about the whole controversy surrounding Nichol’s presidency, there was never a moment when I didn’t care about the College. And there was never a time when I felt I couldn’t voice my opinion. I admire all those who took a stand to speak out against, or in favor of, recent events. I love that so many people care for the sake of the College.

Indeed, alma mater hail!
Kalyani Phansalkar is a freshman at the College.



BY VICKY CHAO, FLAT HAT CARTOONIST

Nichol supporters suppress debate

George Harris and Paul Davies

FLAT HAT GUEST COLUMNISTS



A few days after Provost Geoff Feiss reportedly giggled in public at the prospects of a faculty strike and Dean of Arts and Sciences Carl Strikwerda offered full assistance to the new president while expressing his intent to devote his class to student discussion of Board of Visitors’ failures, Chemistry Professor Gary Defotis stood before a hastily called meeting of the faculty of Arts and Sciences. He supported the BOV’s decision not to renew former College President Gene Nichol’s contract and argued that the BOV did not bend to ideological pressure from the extreme right. Economics Professor Robert Archibald followed with an expression of anger at his colleague’s assumptions about the BOV. Separately, English Professor Colleen Kennedy criticized in the press Nichol’s self-serving e-mail that fueled the attack.

All this took courage. It takes courage to speak up in a hostile environment carefully cultivated to ensure conformity, which is true among the faculty of Arts and Sciences. We write to support such laudable dissent.

The revolvers need to look in the mirror, because they are guilty of the very charges they allege against the BOV: of allowing ideology and politics to get in the way of a rational decision and ignoring established members of the College community. It’s time to deconstruct the practice of politicizing everything.

Last spring, we publicly accused the administration of abusing its authority in reviewing the philosophy department and made factual claims in the press never denied by the administration. If our factual claims are true, then there has been serious executive failure in the administration.

To make this vivid, imagine that, without affording any prior opportunity for rebuttal and without the knowledge of those accused, the administration releases as a public document a report containing unspecific, unsubstantiated and anonymous accusations against unnamed but easily identified women faculty. Imagine the accusations detail misconduct that, if substantiated, would ruin reputations. And imagine that two women from that department make public the very same kinds of factual claims of abuse that we provided. What would the reaction of students and faculty be? No doubt, an impassioned call for investigation of serious executive failure.

Yet, when precisely this form of abuse was perpetuated against a group of male faculty in philosophy, not a hint of outrage was expressed. Not even a word of concern. Why? Because students and faculty now raging against the BOV don’t want to know the truth about anything that would interfere with the political goal of retaining a popular president. Ideology and politics become reasons for ignoring members of the College community and prevent a fair assessment of the president. Procedural justice is ignored.

The same applies to the Faculty Hearing Committee. It dismissed our grievance as “unworthy of consideration” on a gratuitous technicality and denied us a formal hearing to present evidence. Why? Not because of the nature of our case, since the FHC would never have denied women faculty a formal hearing under the same circumstances. So why deny us? Politics and ideology. The fear that such a hearing would jeopardize a popular president. Ideology before fairness and truth.

Ditto the Faculty Assembly. We filed a complaint against the administration with the accreditation agency (SACS), informed the Faculty Assembly of our complaint and asked

to meet with the Executive Committee to discuss it. Not even a reply. Why? Ideology and politics? A threat to retaining a popular president?

The Arts and Sciences Faculty Affairs Committee is similarly politicized. If our complaint had come from women faculty rather than men in philosophy, the FAC would have aggressively called for an inquiry. Emergency meetings, a faculty strike and classes canceled. Why not in our case? Because the abuses endured by some colleagues (but only some) are less important than the politics of saving a popular president.

And why did the FAC write a letter to the BOV calling for Nichol’s renewal without taking a vote after open discussion of the faculty of Arts and Sciences? They said because they already knew from countless e-mails of majority support. Of course, that deprives the minority of faculty an opportunity to engage in discussion that might change some minds. The politics of protecting the president justifies ignoring dissent.

We applaud the courage of our dissenting colleagues and the foresight of the BOV. To students and faculty who have turned their backs on members of this community legitimately seeking your help: you are in no position to accuse the BOV, state legislators or Jim Jones ’82 of politicizing the process. We are not “in solidarity” with you. The motives you falsely ascribe to others are clearly your own.

Professor George Harris and Associate Professor Paul Davies are members of the College’s philosophy department.

Nichol protests: a cost-benefit analysis

Christopher Burks

FLAT HAT GUEST COLUMNIST



Within hours of former College President Gene Nichol’s resignation, my e-mail inbox was bombarded with requests to join approximately 37 pro-Nichol Facebook groups and attend 418 more associated rallies, demonstrations, vigils, bake sales, book clubs, sing-alongs and protests.

The campus was in an uproar — or so it seemed. Classes were canceled. Students and teachers would join together in a general academic strike. There would be massive demonstrations on the Sunken Garden. Our voices would finally be heard. So what happened?

I rolled out of bed Wednesday morning intrigued by what might happen. Before leaving to go to class, I checked my e-mail one last time. No canceled classes for me — bummer. I stepped out the door into a gloomy, rainy morning and trudged toward Washington Hall. As I crossed the soaked Sunken Garden, I noticed one thing: it was empty. As I

discovered at lunch, the “protest” had been moved into the University Center to escape the rain. There, as I stood in line to eat, I witnessed the 85 or so students that had gathered to relax in a public space, eat, talk, study, sit alone against a wall with a laptop or otherwise demonstrate their support for the ex-president and disdain for the Board of Visitors.

Our parents would be disappointed in this weak excuse for a protest. I know I was. In the days leading up to the BOV’s ultimate decision not to renew Nichol’s contract, it had become increasingly fashionable for students to express their support for the then-president, proudly wearing buttons or T-shirts that read “If President Nichol’s Not Welcome Here ... Then Neither Am I.”

When it was announced that Nichol would not be returning as our president next year, students rushed to their computers so that each could boldly proclaim that he or she was more indignant about his “firing” (a frustrating misnomer) than the next student. By the time I checked my e-mail, many of these groups had as many as 1,500 members. Where were these kids Wednesday?

Even the several dozen students

that did brave the inclement weather to gather inside the UC atrium seemed to lack an understanding of what a protest is — what it’s supposed to accomplish. Protests are all about gaining leverage in a bargaining situation by altering the authorities’ cost-benefit analysis. The idea is to take action that raises the costs for the authorities to the point that these costs exceed those of acquiescing to the protestors’

If you want the school administration not only to take notice, but also to take action, you have to force their hand — be disruptive.

demands, or at least reaching a compromise solution.

The dissident efforts of our colleagues have failed in many respects. It was unclear exactly what the protestors’ goals were. Obviously, Nichol isn’t coming back. Even if the timid assembly in the UC was aimed at expressing dissatisfaction and “demanding answers from the BOV,” the protestors created no incentives for the authorities to meet

their demands. A handful of students peacefully gathering in a public space designed for that purpose will hardly make the BOV members or school administrators tremble, and it takes little effort for these figures to click “delete,” sending the array of angry e-mails and “open letters” directly to the trash can.

It will take much more radical action to make those in power to take notice — not to simply be heard, but to be listened to. If you want the school administration not only to take notice, but also to take action, you have to force their hand — be disruptive. Imagine if, instead of gathering in the atrium, the protestors had simply moved into the adjacent UC dining hall. With sufficient numbers, the protestors could have occupied all seats in the dining room, effectively shutting down the facility for the day.

Unfortunately (or, perhaps, fortunately), the protestors are also subject to their own cost-benefit analyses. For the protesting students, they have to see the potential gains of the protest as exceeding the present and potential future costs of engaging in the act of dissidence. The low turnout and tranquility of Wednesday’s demonstrations suggest that either the costs were too

high or the perceived benefits were too low. It is easy to join a Facebook group for which there are no consequences and only slightly harder to gather at night outside the president’s house to pay tribute to a beloved leader. It is amazing how quickly minimal costs, such as rain or skipping class, dissuaded further participation, and how the fear of additional costs by career-minded students at the College prevented the type of escalation that would have been required to achieve any sort of favorable outcome.

Clearly, if the protestors truly believed as strongly in the injustice of the Nichol situation as they like to tell us and saw tangible benefits to their actions, they would be willing to go to much greater lengths — that is, incur much greater costs — to achieve those benefits.

As I was walking to my class in Washington that afternoon, I passed a friend posting a flier for the “strike” on one of the bulletin boards. “I guess you won’t be in class today,” I said.

“No,” he replied, “I think I have to go. I’ve missed too many days already this semester.”

Christopher Burks is a junior at the College.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A sad day for the College To the Editor:

I am a cum laude graduate of the College and recipient of the Benjamin Stoddert Ewell award. I do not want to delay in getting to the exact purpose of this letter, because I know exactly what it is that speaks to Rector Michael Powell ’85. In the past year, I have become financially affluent, thanks in many parts to my education at the College. In this time, I have donated hundreds of dollars to political candidates and hundreds of dollars to charities, but not a penny to my alma mater. I refrained from donating to the College because I wanted to see what happened to former College President Gene Nichol’s contract before making that decision.

After learning about the events of last week, I am happy that I made such a decision because if I had decided otherwise, I would be in even poorer spirits than I am now. I would also like to inform Powell that the College will never see a penny of mine, unless I feel that it has done something to remedy the grave errors that the BOV has committed by dismissing the greatest individual to be affiliated with the College since Thomas Jefferson.

I do not know too much about Powell, but I do know a great deal about his father, who is an honorable, admirable and courageous man. However, like his father eight years ago, he too has entangled himself in a web of right-wing ideologues that use their money as a tool of power to suppress dissent and enact their agenda, sacrificing democratic values as a victim. Powell’s lack of integrity in the face of well-financed pressure is reprehensible, and just like the hacks in the Bush administration, he will someday regret the decisions that he has made.

His statement in regard to Nichol’s dismissal is completely unconvincing, and the fact that he attempted to buy Nichol off for his silence speaks louder than any words his crooked mouth may happen to utter. But Nichol is not for sale, because he will not compromise democratic principles to the almighty dollar, which should not be surprising due to the achievements of his time as president. In fact, he was a sacrificial lamb that students, faculty and alumni will mobilize around in an arduous effort to restore justice to the College. Powell should enjoy the time that he and his cronies have remaining to subvert justice for the benefit of private interests, because his days truly are numbered: throughout Williamsburg, throughout Virginia and throughout the entire country.

— Jordan Kupersmith ’06

Nichol left legacy of civil engagement To the Editor:

Last Tuesday, I found myself wishing I was back at the College.

Many of my former classmates felt a similar pull — as members of the Class of 2007, we are in the unique position of straddling the divide between our first months as alumni and our past years as students. Despite varying degrees of devotion to our alma mater, many of us shared a longing to go to our College, to show our support for former College President Gene Nichol, to stand in solidarity with our former classmates and professors and to protest the unilateral decision of the Board of Visitors not to renew Nichol’s contract. This kind of student activism highlights exactly why Nichol’s actions have been advantageous to the College community.

Many have criticized the manner in which Nichol resigned, questioning whether his dramatic exit was beneficial to the College. I dare to say that it was. His resignation has ignited a passion among students and faculty I have never witnessed on the College’s campus. Had Nichol quietly accepted the BOV’s decision and exited his position at the end of this academic year, the urgent need to have student and faculty’s voices legitimately represented on the BOV would not be so obvious. In the end, what better gift can a university president impart to students of a liberal arts education — a meager increase in U.S. News and World Report’s rankings or a real life lesson in the value of civic engagement and the importance of representation?

The BOV claims this decision was not based on politics or ideology; rather, they imply that it was Nichol’s shortcomings as a top executive that led to their decision. If Nichol’s biggest fault was not anticipating alumni disapproval of the removal of the Wren cross, then the events of the past week should give members of the BOV reason to review their own job performance. While they may not have anticipated Nichol’s immediate resignation, their actions have shown them to be willfully ignorant of sentiment among the students and faculty at the College. Perhaps we would all do well to recall that a college exists fundamentally to educate students, and not to necessarily produce warm memories among alumni — as important as this may be to fund-raising.

The Class of 2007 left a record-breaking gift to the College, a testament to how much hope we had for our institution with Nichol at the helm. Perhaps that hope can be restored with a renewed student and faculty participation in the decisions that affect the College. It looks like students and faculty are off to a good start at raising their voices, and it is my fervent hope that the BOV will hear them.

— Meghan McCarthy ’07

Time for students to take action To the Editor:

I hope the Board of Visitors is proud of what it has brought upon the College. Moments after reading former College President Gene Nichol’s e-mail, I sat down to write this response. It is one that is a long time coming and I believe to be a necessary statement to the state of affairs at the College that I call home. Even now, as I sit working in the Admissions Office, I find it hard to speak with students that want to attend the College and convince them to attend the College I love, even when it does not feel the same.

Since the first time I came to the College, I knew this was the community I was meant to be a part of and the first time I met Nichol, I knew he was to be my president. His booming voice and jolly demeanor made me feel like he truly cared about me not only as a student, but as a person. For those who feel differently, read the e-mail in which he resigned his position, you will see it was not a vindictive move on his part, but rather respect for each student here. Nichol took responsibility for his actions and defended our rights as people and as Americans. Throughout his time at the College, Nichol has been one not to bend over, while allowing for students to suffer; instead, he says what he means and he means what he says. I’m sorry if that is the not the way it has been in the past, but the times change, and so does the College.

I am deeply offended by the way in which the BOV, alumni and Virginia lawmakers have acted over the last few weeks, months and years. The removal of our president was shocking; however, the icing on the cake was the “substantial economic incentives.” I am proud to say that my president did not accept the deal, but I am appalled that the BOV would even offer it.

For the first time in three years, I feel helpless. I see the administration crumbling around me, I see the outsiders controlling the school in a tyrannical way and I see the students becoming the pawns in a game going after our king. I feel as if the last few months we have been sitting in check, waiting for the final move to be made, and now it has. Congratulations, you won. Nichol’s gone and the students will rejoice. **False!**

The only thing that was accomplished last Tuesday was the infuriation of thousands of students. These students are the ones that will shape the world and, to be perfectly honest, don’t fuck with us. Students attending the College are the best in the country, but we receive no respect from the administration, the BOV or the lawmakers of Virginia. It was not the voice of the students that got Nichol fired and it was not the voice of the faculty; instead, it was the voice from the past, trying to flex its dying muscle to prove it still controls what goes on here at the College.

This is the time for the students to stand up for their rights. This is the time to take action. This is the time to prove that students at the College will not remain under the control of those who are no longer attending. It is not the actions of Nichol that harmed the College; instead, it is the distrust by those above him, and now the removal despite the opinions of the students. We are old enough to decide what is best for us, trust us to make our own choices. Nichol will always be my president.

— Greg Collins ’09

Ashamed of the BOV To the Editor:

I remember Michael Powell ’85 well from back in the day. His impromptu stage performances in the dorm with a shampoo bottle microphone were interesting; his narcissistic traits were glaringly apparent even back then.

I never managed to graduate from the College, flunking out my senior year. Because of my poor performance, I am well aware my opinion may be met with a quick tap of the delete button, but I am no disgruntled former student. Ultimately I received my degree from another institution, but I still think fondly of the College, consider myself one of its students and care about its welfare. This is why the last two communications I have received from the College have distressed me so much.

Typically I enjoy former College President Gene Nichol’s eloquent and informative communications, but his last e-mail letter was disturbing. And just when I thought the College’s fortunes couldn’t take a turn for the worse, I received Powell’s message.

Perhaps the only blessing of my failure at the College so many years ago is a fearlessness of expression when I write that I wholeheartedly believe Nichol’s account of the matters at hand, and I think Powell and the Board of Visitors are flat-out lying. While my grades may have been quite low at the College, I did manage to develop

fully a capacity to recognize bullshit. Powell’s letter was clearly intended to provide damage control, but it has only served to corroborate what Nichol asserts in his letter.

The peculiar timing and transparent nature of Powell’s rebuttal letter regarding his and the BOV’s regret at Nichol’s immediate resignation could not be more telling of some good ol’ boys’ retaliation toward a man who has worked tirelessly for the student body of the College. Was it the Wren Chapel cross controversy that really got to these Christian right-wingers? In his letter Powell seemed to proudly announce how the BOV will continue to honor Nichol’s decision, as if he continually offered him nothing but support. In actuality, I’m sure Powell knows that he could never get away with returning the cross now any more than those good ol’ boys further south could restore those carved Ten Commandments tablets to that courthouse in Alabama. This would incur a barrage of lawsuits. He may want to consult Chancellor Sandra Day O’Connor about this if he doesn’t believe me, for rest assured, I would be the first in line. Separation of church and state is the grand illusion in our country.

Powell’s half-hearted disavowal of Nichol’s statements led me to do quite a bit of research on the topic the past two days, and I can find nothing in Nichol’s actions that could suggest his being let go is anything more than political payback for the ideological positions he has taken at the College, despite Powell’s critical insistence to the contrary. I agree with each of Nichol’s decisions, and I am ashamed at the weakness of the rector and BOV in not standing by him. Students need someone like Nichol to stand up for them, their rights and their creative natures. The BOV should stand up for itself, and for the man it hired who was only doing the job he was asked to do.

— Mason Peay

Alum describes NIU shooting To the Editor:

While the events at the College are certainly distressing, and I was following them quite carefully, the news from Northern Illinois University clearly now overshadows them. As an alumnus of the College, I learned a great deal from my professors, fellow students and the administration (especially Vice President for Student Affairs Sam Sadler) about what it means to be a student in an open university, where the free flow of ideas and people is essential to learning.

All that was brought to a crushing end Feb. 14 when a lone individual used the openness to his own purposes to wreak havoc on the lives of thousands. I could go into the details of the event, as I witnessed the immediate aftermath of the event and lost a student. I teach in the classroom and, just last semester, conducted a large lecture class in that auditorium that had its final conducted a week late and under the protection of police officers as the result of a threat of violence.

I urge you to bring these events to the attention of the College. This can happen anywhere. I urge you and the entire College family to keep the NIU community in your thoughts over the coming weeks.

My best wishes to you and the College for your safety.

— J.D. Bowers ’89
Asst. History Professor at Northern Illinois Univ.

Voice your opinion about the future of the College:
FlatHatNews.com

VARIETY

The night bus

Steer Clear provides entertaining after-hours transportation

By **CLAIRE ELLERY**
Flat Hat Staff Writer

Riding with Steer Clear feels like traveling with some of Chaucer’s Canterbury pilgrims. Only, instead of a knight, a miller and a nun, I find a Stairwell, a lab partner and a freestyling band.

Steer Clear, which provides transportation for students every Friday and Saturday night from 9:30 p.m. to 2:30 a.m., started its spring service Feb. 8. Though most students view it as a service solely for the inebriated, it is for anyone who needs a ride to or from campus.

Of course, many of the passengers are under the influence of alcohol, which makes for an interesting ride. The Steer Clear vehicle is equipped with plastic buckets, which can be used and then mandatorily bought for \$1. When students aren’t so lucky as to make it into the colorful animal bucket, they have to pay a \$30 fine.



ALL PHOTOS BY ALEX HAGLUND — THE FLAT HAT
Phil Olive ’11 drives the Steer Clear van. For a ride, call 1-DRIV.

“If they tell us, we’ll pull over and let them get back to nature,” Schoettler said. Steer Clear staffs its van with a driver and a coordinator who are paid \$8/hour. This is the first semester the program hasn’t been run by volunteers.

“We’re more reliable now that there’s a paid staff,” Schoettler said.

Will Sealy ’09, Student Assembly undersecretary of health and safety for substance abuse, became Steer Clear’s director this semester because Greek Life could no longer support the program due to liability issues. With funding from the SA and new employees, the program plans to be more stable than in previous years.

To get a better idea of the service, I went along for a ride.

11:30 p.m. — My night began with a pick-up of two sober girls from the Green Leafe who needed a ride to Millington Hall.

“I have a biology lab I need to work on,” one girl said laughing.

“We’re not just a drunk bus,” driver Alison Schoettler ’11 said. “We’re here to help anyone who needs a safe ride.”

Soon after, Steer Clear’s cell phone (which rings with a jazzy rendition of The Beatles’ “Love Me Do”) received a call for a pick-up at the King and Queen Apartments on Scotland Street. There, the van picked up two rather happy travelers on their way to the Midlands Apartments.

“You guys are awesome,” one student said. “I’m so glad Steer Clear’s back because it’s really hard to get from on campus to off campus, and I’m glad I don’t have to pass out on someone’s floor.” Nearly every rider expressed his gratitude for Steer Clear’s return.

12:23 a.m. — Coordinating where to go next was tricky with the large number of callers.

“Our goal is especially to get the people who are farthest away and get them to where they need to go, because they’re the most likely to drive,” staff member Erica Smith ’09 said.

Steer Clear went to Governor’s Square, where it picked up three passengers on their way to the Units and the Ludwell Apartments. Before getting back to campus, the van picked up 10 more people from a party on Lafayette Street. Though the service doesn’t seem have clear boundaries, it travels as far as Steeple Chase and the Midlands.

With a much noisier crowd, driver Sarah Will ’10 had to yell over the group to ask where they were going. “We’re



The drivers exchanged a knowing smile, one of the many that would follow as the night went on.

1:41 — During a flow of calmer students, we stopped at the Hospitality House to pick up a married couple in formal attire. The wife, a student at the school of education, was especially grateful.

“It’s so sweet for them to spend their night doing this. Especially when cabs are so expensive.”

She and her husband, also a student, got off the van at Pocahontas Trail and walked home, so as to not inconvenience the other passengers by forcing the van to go out of its way.

The other passengers, who had waited almost half an hour for the van to get back to Governor’s Square, began to sound like children on a road trip — “Are we there yet?” “I have to pee.” The drivers reassured them home was close.

2:08 — Back at the apartment complex, we ran into the beatboxers again. One boarded stating, “I do too have a badonkadonk.” Clearly the group’s energy was still on the rise. Soon the improvisation and beats started up again, flavored with cursing and crude humor.

I decided to call it a night, so I asked Steer Clear for my own ride home. Though I may have been off to bed, Steer Clear still had 20 minutes of service, and sure enough, the happy notes of “Love Me Do” played on.

CONFUSION CORNER

Gene Nichol: not unlike a giant ball of Gouda

James Damon
FLAT HAT COLUMNIST



I distinctly despise public displays of affection. Kisses, hugs, shouts and handshakes bother me to no end. You can imagine, then, my hesitation to attend the candle-lit revelry for former College President Gene Nichol last Tuesday evening. The event was gooiier than a brownie sundae, and I left Nichol’s ex-front yard in need of some bitter tea.

“Did you forget to grab a candle?” a girl asked me as I entered Nichol’s compound. The girl doled out candles to students and accepted thank you cards for Nichol in a large cardboard box. I told her I did not need a candle.

“But then how are you going to show your support for Nichol?” she asked me. “Don’t you love Nichol?” Love is too hyperbolic a word to describe my affinity for Nichol. I like Nichol. I think he gave nice speeches and always wore nice suits. But he’s not my mom or my spider plant, so I cannot love him.

Yet the word “love” was thrown around endlessly at last Tuesday’s vigil. Student speakers and those in attendance proclaimed their love for Nichol, sometimes by shouting, “Gene Nichol, we love you.” The president of the College’s staff organization, Ann Repeta, called Nichol “the only person who ever cared about us.” At moments of intense emotion, students raised their candles and clapped.

Amid the countless burning flames, I wondered how many of these thousands of people actually cared for Nichol. And if they did adore Nichol, then why? Nichol is just a person, someone with notable merits and flaws. He didn’t do a bad job as president, but as this newspaper correctly argued in its Feb. 15 staff editorial, the Board of Visitors acted appropriately in not renewing Nichol’s contract.

Though I cannot speak for that crowd of ardent Nichol lovers, I believe I know why they reacted so strongly. In a time of uncertainty, the need to act grips us. They over expressed their appreciation for Nichol because of a need to say something.

I can relate. When I volunteered to

make an appetizer for a family gathering last Christmas, I was unsure how relatives would respond to my smoked Gouda cheese ball. Would my aunt with the bad back find the faint hints of steak sauce over imposing? Would my grandfather think that sliced walnuts complemented the thick texture of the cheese ball? Would the presentation impress my cousin, a professional car detailer?

“Are you alright?” my dad asked me. I had been standing in the butter aisle of the grocery store, deliberating for 10 minutes on whether to purchase the unsalted or salted Kerrigold butter for my appetizer.

“I just don’t know what to do,” I said, “I just want these cheese balls to taste good.” After another hour spent combing the store for ingredients, I went home and made my cheese balls. When I was done, I had three enormous cheese balls. I decided that it would be better to make too much instead of too little. I didn’t want to be remembered as the grandson with the smallest cheese balls.

Nichol is our cheese ball.

Many of us probably went to the candlelight vigil unsure of how we felt. We liked Nichol; he was a nice man and an okay president. To overcompensate for this uncertainty, we yelled, we sang and we hugged. All of this made Nichol seem like a saint, which he is not.

This is my general problem with public displays of affection. The nature of affection is personal, so kissing in public always strikes me as disingenuous. Affection becomes a performance for complete strangers to witness. In truth, deep emotions such as love should be shared privately over jugs of wine and plates of smoked Gouda cheese balls. The fact that love is so often displayed publicly implies a shallowness of emotion.

It was unfortunate that I made so many cheese balls last Christmas. My family members approved, but the human body can only process so much cheese. By the end of Christmas break, I was still left with an entire uneaten sphere of Gouda. Every time I opened the refrigerator door it would be stare back at me, telling me to eat it, when I all I wanted to do was move on.

James Damon is a Confusion Corner columnist. He croons his spider plant to sleep every night with lullabies.

‘Scams’ brings physical comedy to PBK

By **ASHLEY MORGAN**
Flat Hat Assoc. Variety Editor

Two engagements, flamboyant costumes, deception and spectator interaction are some of the characteristics that will entertain audience members in the William and Mary Theatre presentation of “The Scams of Scapin.” The show opens Thursday and continues until Sunday.

“The show itself is a late play by Molière Jean-Baptiste Poquelin,” cast member Daniel Wolfe ’10 said. “It pays tribute to an old-school type of improvisational theater called commedia dell’arte.” In this type of theater, which originated in Italy, each performance becomes slightly different — especially because certain parts of the show involve audience interaction and response.

“The Scams of Scapin,” according to advertisements, is the story of “a wily servant whose elaborate tricks unite two pair of young lovers against the wishes of their aging and meddling fathers. Scapin and his clever accomplices weasel their way to a happy ending.”

All of the main characters have interesting personalities that entertain audience members. “I play Zerbinetta, who is one of four lovers — there are two sets,” cast member Carrie Adams ’08 said. “She’s a gypsy who laughs all the time, and her big mouth gets her into a lot of trouble.”

Another tribute to the Italian theater



ALEX HAGLUND — THE FLAT HAT
The actors of “Scams of Scapin” wear masks to help better portray personalities.

is the addition of six new characters: the Zanni. These characters were a creation of theater Professor and director Elizabeth Wiley.

According to Adams, these six clowns help move along the action. “They eavesdrop,” she said. “They act out long monologues, they trip people who need to be tripped and listen to stories that are being told. They perform a function that I don’t think Molière’s audience needed. Modern audiences are much more visual ... Zanni help propel some of the language into the physical world.”

All cast members participated in each aspect of the productions. Students rehearsed their parts and then participated in building the set.

“What’s interesting about this

production is that our lighting, set and sound designers are all students,” Adams said. “Our set designer — a student named Maura Roche ’08 — was sponging the floor until five in the morning last week. That gives you a taste of the time commitment involved.”

Those involved in the production have dedicated the show to former College President Gene Nichol. A letter drafted to Nichol states: “It is our sincerest hope that we can do for you what comedy does best: engage the open minds and funny bones of those who wish to, if for only a moment, escape their woes.”

Student tickets are \$5. Performances are Thursday through Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. at Phi Beta Kappa Memorial Hall.

SUDOKU

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Easy

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3	2		4	8				
		9						

Hard

INSIDE SPORTS

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Sports Editor **Jeff Dooley**
Associate Sports Editor **Miles Hilder**
Associate Sports Editor **Andrew Pike**

What's on TV?

NBA
Lakers vs. Suns
— 8 p.m. Wed. on ESPN

COLLEGE BASKETBALL
#1 Memphis vs. #2 Tennessee
— 9 p.m. Sat. on ESPN



Sound bytes

“You think they’re going to kiss you on the lips?”
— Memphis Head Coach John Calipari reacting to a shower of debris from upset UAB fans following the Tigers 79-78 victory.



By the numbers

515
— Millions of dollars appropriated for a new Florida Marlins stadium. The team ranked last in NL attendance in 2006 and 2007.

HOME FIELD ADVANTAGE

Following the Flat Hat Sports Campus Golf tourney

Kasi Kangarloo

FLAT HAT ASSOC. REVIEWS EDITOR



The Flat Hat Sports team makes their way to the Sunken Garden around 11:30 Saturday, Feb. 16, golf clubs and tennis balls in hand.

The tension is high. The stakes are high. After months of training and mental preparation, Sports Editor Jeff Dooley and Associate Sports Editors Miles Hilder and Andrew Pike are ready to lay it all on the line as they compete in the First Annual Flat Hat Sports Campus Golf tournament.

Joined at the first tee by their caddy, production assistant Summer Finck, the Muggsy Bogues Trio (their official team name) traded in their professional courtesy for pure competitive fire. Here are a few highlights from the action:

1st hole — This here’s no amateur hour. Hundreds of weary-eyed students swing their way up the Sunken Garden, the first of nine holes, their glazed expressions a sure testament to their rigorous preparation in past weeks. Pike is first up on the tee, sauntering over lazily before setting down his tennis ball. He nails it on the first swing — what will quickly become a prized accomplishment on the course — though he fails to get it off the ground, sending it lamely over the grass.

Dooley’s spotless white blazer and royal blue

shorts flap in the cold wind as he sets down his ball. “Game on,” Dooley yells as he tees off, while Pike goes chasing after his tee shot.

Pike clearly has the crowd on his side, however, as female passers-by seem quick to fall under the spell of his black, one-piece pajama suit, decked over neatly with colorful dinosaurs.

“I like your onesie,” a girl shouts to Pike from among the crowd of students. Pike responds in true rock-star fashion, unzipping the pajama suit to reveal his bare chest.

“I wasn’t gonna show all the goods for free,” Pike said following the match.

Hilder, who benefits largely from traditional golf wisdom and classic golf attire, fails to match his promised birdie and finishes one over, while Dooley lands the bucket with a solid four, good for par. Pike finishes with a score of 10.

2nd hole — In light of Pike’s performance, a 10-stroke limit has been enforced. Before the drive, another girl runs over to comment on Pike’s outfit. “I like your blanket sleeper,” she shouts.

Hilder takes the lead with par, while a score of six is negotiated for Dooley after some debate.

3rd hole — The gang is amazed to see a group of visitors, mostly family members and children, weaving their way through the debauchery between students and tennis balls. Hilder prepares to send a ball their way.

5th hole — The trio faces their toughest hole yet, forced to drive up the massive hill in front of

Chandler Hall.

“Watch and learn, ladies,” Dooley says before winding up for his “run-up drive,” clearly Happy Gilmore-inspired, sending the ball flying a good mile off point.

7th hole — “When people play with emotions and hotheadedness, they have that John Daly blow-up, and that’s what just happened,” Hilder says, commenting on Dooley’s performance. “Three more holes and he’s done.”

The trio now overlooks a bucket before the bamboo forest on the fringe of the Crim Dell, and as Hilder makes his comments, he sends his drive a good 20 feet past the bucket, right into the heart of the swamp.

Dooley is next on the tee, but before he can hit his drive the team is confronted by a group of girls selling baked goods for charity. Dooley is distraught, commenting on how Tiger Woods never has his tee shots interrupted by people selling cookies.

9th hole — The tension is high, and emotions are running wild. Hilder finishes the day out strong, and Dooley, with one last chance at redemption, fails to hit his final putt after a good five or six strokes. Pike, likewise, does not finish well.

“I brought a lot of mental focus to the game, maybe not a lot of game to the game,” Pike says. “The fact is, I’m getting better every hole. We play 18 holes, I win.”

A hush falls over the course as Finck, who served



SUMMER FINCK — THE FLAT HAT
Miles Hilder, Andrew Pike and Jeff Dooley.

double duty as caddy and scorekeeper, recites the scores. Hilder comes in first with 32, with Dooley (upset over his futile attempts to rig the competition in his favor) coming in four strokes back at 36. Pike finishes in third with a score of 43.

“I’ll take that,” Pike says.
E-mail Kasi Kangarloo at knkang@wm.edu.

Fencing team rebounds after last semester’s tragedy

TRIBE FENCING *from page 10*

team that once the next semester started up, the team would too. But for the time being, they got back in the routine of enjoying each other’s company again, by resuming their tradition of getting dinner at the Caf following practice.

“That was really what got us through it,” Hennig said. “It wasn’t talking to other people; it was being with each other and realizing that the team is still here.”

Hennig, who first began fencing at the age of eight because he liked the sport’s similarities to the light-saber fight scenes in “Star Wars,” made his decision to attend the College in large part due to fencing. He had known Conomikes for a number of years, as the coach would referee many of the youth fencing events in which Hennig, a Northern Virginia native, took part. The

opportunity to fence for Conomikes, the man who effectively created the fencing program at the College, proved to be enough to entice Hennig to attend.

“I don’t think it would be possible to write a sentence about Tribe fencing without including Pete in it in some way,” Hennig said. “He is Tribe fencing up to this point, and from here on it’s up to us to use everything he was about to keep the thing going.”

Upon Hennig’s arrival, Conomikes went to work on getting Hennig to buy into the coach’s emphasis on the importance of team unity. It is this unity that has been so important to the team as they rebound following losing their coach and teammate.

“The farther away you get from it, the more you realize that the way he taught things made a lot of sense,” Hennig said.

“Even though he’s not here, we still have a bunch of people who believe in the team who can pass that on.”

Conomikes’ advice has clearly paid off, as both Hennig and the team as a whole have achieved tremendous success over the past few years.

Despite only being able to compete as a club team, meaning that the only funding the team receives is from the College’s Recreational Sports department and outside donations, Tribe fencing has proven that they can hang with even Varsity-level competition. The team won last year’s MACFA title, has won seven Virginia Cup championships in a row, and has consistently been the best club team in the MACFA. Hennig posted a near-perfect 34-1 record in foil last year during the regular season, while von Hohenleiten was an impressive 33-2 in epee.

Friday

The Tribe is all business just three days later, as almost the entire team of 17 individuals (three women, 14 men) is in attendance. The members perform a series of drills in smaller groups before breaking up into one-on-one fencing practice bouts.

Hennig, who is dealing with a cold, is not practicing but still coaching. He, along with other more experienced members like Von Hohenleiten and Balog, is offering instruction to the less experienced members as they prepare for the weekend’s competition.

They break off into their respective specialties — epee, sabre and foil. Each specialty requires a different weapon and set of rules, and likewise draws a different type of athlete.

The manner in which the fencers go about their business and dedicate themselves to getting better is



PHOTOS BY SPENCER ATKINSON — THE FLAT HAT
Above left: the fencing team’s wall of trophies. Above right: senior co-captain Tom Hennig (center) coaches some of his teammates during a team practice.



demonstrative of how the sport has played a role in the team’s emotional recovery.

“For me, [fencing has] played a pretty large part,” Hennig said. “When [the accident] first happened, everyone felt kind of powerless. But when [I] go into fencing, and I’m coaching or doing drills or something like that, in my own small [way], I feel like I’m doing something for Pete or for Ben. And I think a lot of the [team members] feel the same way. That’s part of the reason why we’ve been so dedicated since the semester started.”

So far this semester the team has competed in three events, and they have another three scheduled, including a home competition Mar. 15-16.

While the team is clearly focused in their practice, they also take time to joke and have fun with each other. Teammates are helpful and encouraging to one another. Hennig calls this year’s squad the most tight-knit he’s seen in his four years with

the team.

As for the emotional well-being of the team’s members, Hennig feels that, all things considered, the squad is doing all right.

“Everyone is getting better at [his or her] own speed, which is the important part,” Hennig said.

For Hennig, like many of his teammates, getting to put his gear on and pick up a sword again has been a healing experience, one that makes him appreciate the opportunity to compete in the sport he loves. He can still remember the feeling he had the first time he got out on the fencing strip following the accident.

“It was different from opening up the [fencing room],” Hennig said. “It felt more like getting back to business, kind of, starting to get things back to normal. It felt more like a transition from grieving to coping, to going back to the way things are going to be.”

Huskies rally past Tribe

W. BASKETBALL *from page 10*

44-34 after Heath capitalized on a three-point play. A strong layup from Kaylor helped maintain their lead at 54-44 with 7:03 remaining. But as soon as the Tribe appeared comfortable, Northeastern cut into their deficit with an 11-4 run to pull within three at 58-55.

“We did not play with the same defensive intensity in the last 10 minutes that we played with in the first half,” Taylor said.

The Huskies continued to battle back, hitting shots and taking a 65-62 late in the game. Senior forward Devin James earned two of her 15 points with a put-back at the 1:18 mark to trim the deficit to 65-64.

Down one, the Tribe tightened its

defense, holding Northeastern scoreless in the final minute. When Portell secured a defensive rebound with seven seconds left, the Tribe had one more shot at victory. In its final possession, the College struggled to move the ball past half-court, as Northeastern tipped the ball out of bounds with 0.2 seconds left.

Following a timeout, junior Dani Kell’s inbounds pass found Kaylor, but she was unable to get a shot off before the buzzer. Kaylor finished with 18 points and eight rebounds, but her spirited effort could not catapult the Tribe to victory.

“We just didn’t finish out the game,” Kaylor said. “They shot the lights out and we missed when we had the opportunity, but in the end we shouldn’t have been put in that position down the stretch.”



ALEX HAGLUND — THE FLAT HAT
Sophomore guard Lindsey Moller.

College falls in third-straight road game

M. BASKETBALL *from page 10*

left in the half to bring the score to 28-27 at the break. Of the Tigers’ 28 points in the first half, 21 came off three-pointers

After the break, the Tigers were able to turn a one-point deficit into an 11-point cushion behind a 12-0 run to push the score to 45-34 with 12:28 remaining in the game.

Towson stretched its lead to as many as 14 points in the second half before the College brought the advantage down to 10 points, only to watch Towson forward

Tony Durant feed the ball to fellow forward Junior Hairston, who was fouled making an off-balanced lay-in off the glass. Hairston hit the free throw and finish the contest with a game-high 21 points.

The College set the all-time school record for three-point shots made in a season with 201, connecting on seven of 23 Saturday and edging out last year’s tally of 200.

The Tribe returns to action Wednesday night when they host Drexel University (11-16, 4-11) at 7 p.m.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

CROSS COUNTRY

Moran, Newberry finish in top 10 at Nat'l XC Champs

Two Tribe coaches posted top-10 finishes in Saturday's USAT&F National Cross Country Championships, likely securing slots on the U.S. delegation to next month's World Championships. Ed Moran '03 placed fourth in the 12K, finishing in 35:42 to capture a spot on the World Championship team, while Kathy Newberry '00 placed seventh in the 8K, good enough to become the first alternate for the women's squad. Additionally, Moran has qualified for the U.S. Olympic Trials in the 5,000m and 10,000m, while Newberry is eligible to compete in the 10,000m.

MEN'S TENNIS

College tops Georgia State, stays perfect in CAA

Playing a trio of home matches, the College wrapped up a six-game homestand by staying unbeaten in CAA play, going 2-1 this past weekend at the McCormack-Nagelsen Tennis Center. Friday, the squad knocked off 72nd-ranked Georgia State University, the defending CAA Champions, 5-2, before splitting a pair of Sunday matches. The team nearly upset no. 24 Rice University in the morning, falling by a narrow 4-3 margin, and then shut out James Madison University 7-0 to close out the weekend.

WOMEN'S GYMNASTICS

Tribe falls to ranked foes at Sweetheart Invitational

At the Sweetheart Invitational in Raleigh, N.C., Saturday, the Tribe posted a season-high total of 189.625, yet still finished fourth out of four teams in a quad meet against three ranked opponents. Senior Stevie Waldman led the squad, finishing in seventh place in the all-around while leading the College in four of the five events. The senior broke her career-high on vault, scoring 9.750, then matched her career high on the beam with her 9.800 mark good for third place overall. Freshman Melissa Cream also turned in a strong performance, setting career highs on the beam and floor exercise to aid the College.

LACROSSE

College opens season with 21-9 win over Binghamton

A trio of freshmen led the way for the College, netting 10 first-half goals, as the Tribe won big in their season opener, 21-9 over Binghamton University. Freshmen Maggie Anderson and Grace Golden each notched four goals, while classmate Ashley Holofcener tallied three goals and three assists in the rout. Senior Jaime Sellers and juniors Dolly Williams and Clare Dennis made sure that underclassmen did not completely dominate the stat sheet as each delivered a hat trick as well. Freshman goalie Emily Geary turned in a steady performance in her debut, making five saves, four in the first half.

—By Matt Poms

SCOREBOARD

WOMEN'S TENNIS

2/16 vs. ARKANSAS — W, 4-3
2/16 vs. COLORADO — W, 7-0
2/18 vs. HARVARD — W, 7-0

SCHEDULE

Wed., Feb. 20

WOMEN'S LACROSSE
@ Longwood — 4 p.m.

MEN'S BASKETBALL
DREXEL — 7 p.m.

Thurs., Feb. 21

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
DREXEL — 7 p.m.

Fri., Feb. 22

TRACK AND FIELD
@ Virginia Tech Challenge

MEN'S BASKETBALL: TRIBE 52, TOWSON 64

College finishes road trip 0-3

Tribe drops CAA game at Towson 64-52 for third-straight loss

By CHRIS WEIDMAN
Flat Hat Staff Writer

A frustrated Tribe basketball team walked off the court at the Towson Center Saturday afternoon after losing to Towson University 64-52. The College (13-12, 9-6 CAA) now finds itself in its second three-game losing skid of the season after coming up empty-handed on its three-game road trip.

"Three road games in eight days is tough," Head Coach Tony Shaver said. "That means six days on the road. Getting home is going to be a great thing for us."

The Tribe's shooting woes on the road continued against Towson as the College shot 35.6 percent from the field, while

barely eclipsing 30 percent from three-point land. Towson (10-15, 6-9) bettered the College in both categories, shooting 43.1 percent from the field and over 48 percent from beyond the arc.

"We couldn't score and couldn't finish plays," senior guard Nathan Mann said. "The effort was there, the defense was there, we put ourselves in position to win. We are in a slump offensively ... it is one of those things where we need to get over the hump and relax and play."

Sophomore guard David Schneider was the only Tribe player to manage double-digit scoring, registering 13 points to go along with a team-high six rebounds. Senior guard Laimis Kisielius and junior forward Peter Stein combined with Mann

to shoot seven of 31 from the floor against the Tigers, including three for 12 from three-point range.

Both squads battled back-and-forth throughout the first half with the College managing to capitalize on second-chance points, scoring 12 to Towson's four. The Tribe finished the game outscoring Towson 21-6 on second-chance points, which Mann attributed to missing so many shots.

Neither team took more than a five-point advantage in the first half, while 12 lead changes occurred. Junior forward Chris Darnell hit an open three pointer, off a pass down low from Stein with 1:04

See M. BASKETBALL page 9



ALEX HAGLUND — THE FLAT HAT
The Tribe fell 64-52 at Towson Saturday.

SPORTS FEATURE

Comeback kids



SPENCER ATKINSON — THE FLAT HAT
Following the death of Coach Pete Conomikes and team member freshman Ben Gutenberg last semester, Tribe fencing has resumed its competition slate this semester.

After overcoming a tragedy, Tribe fencing gets back to business

By JEFF DOOLEY
Flat Hat Sports Editor

In the depths of William and Mary Hall, below the bright lights and bleachers of Kaplan Arena, down a poorly-lit corridor that few students of the College even know is there, exists a room. With its fluorescent lights, cinderblock walls and noticeable damage just about everywhere you look, the room does not look like much to the impartial observer. But to the Tribe fencing club, it is home.

And it is here, underneath the arena where thousands could, on any given night, cheer their team on to a comeback victory, that a real-life comeback story is taking place.

Tuesday
Several team members are absent from today's afternoon practice, taking time to rest or catch up on homework following their grueling, weekend-long bout a few days before.

The members who are present, including senior co-captains Tom Hennig and Chris von Hohenleiten and sophomore Marcus Balog, go about their typical business.

Their first task is to roll up the martial arts mats that are currently lying on the floor, property of the martial arts club, with which the fencing team shares the room.

There is no doubt, however, as to whom this room truly belongs. "Tribe Fencing" is stamped in bold, green letters on the room's back wall. Further proof of ownership is found in the utility closet/maintenance room that the team uses for storing various tools and other materials.

With its rickety shelves, rusty wrenches and discarded foils, the room looks as though it could double as a set for the movie "Fight Club."

A number of fencing trophies, most of them old, hang on one of the walls of the utility room. Hennig doesn't know the origin of any of them, except for one: the 2007 Coach of the Year award, issued by the Middle Atlantic Collegiate Fencing Association.

"I know where that one came from," Hennig said. The trophy, awarded to the team's late coach Pete Conomikes, is one of many reminders of the coach that remain in the fencing room. Conomikes was killed in November when the car he was driving careened off of I-64 and crashed as the team was driving to a competition. Freshman Ben Gutenberg, who was riding in Conomikes's

car, died of injuries sustained in the accident a few weeks later.

Freshmen Spencer Butts and Matt Peppe, who were also riding in the car, sustained injuries as well, but both are on their way to a full recovery.

In the days and weeks following the accident, as the team coped with the tragedy of losing members of their team, Hennig and von Hohenleiten continued to open up the fencing room as usual. They did not require that anybody attend practice, but encouraged team members to come by.

"It was more we just wanted [practice] there as a coping mechanism, to relieve stress," Hennig said.

Hennig can still recall what it was like opening the room for the first time following the tragedy.

"It was really weird," Hennig said. "Opening it up the first time I was like, 'I'm going to be the highest ranking person here. Pete's not going to show up. What am I going to do?'"

The team continued to hold practices, although the amount of fencing that got done was less important. There was an unspoken understanding among the members of the

See TRIBE FENCING page 9

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: TRIBE 64, NORTHEASTERN 65

Tribe loses third straight as Huskies rally late, steal win

By JACK POLLOCK
Flat Hat Staff Writer

Northeastern University (8-15, 3-10 CAA) rallied in the final minutes of Sunday's matinee and held off the Tribe (11-14, 5-8) 65-64, as the College dropped its third-straight contest.

Both teams struggled to execute offensively, with the College holding a slim 6-3 advantage six minutes into play. However, the Huskies proved to be lethal from beyond the arc early on, taking an 8-6 lead following one of Kendra Walton's game-high four three-pointers. The Tribe traded baskets with Northeastern before going on a 6-0 tear as sophomore Kelly Heath provided a pair of jumpers to put the College up 16-12 with 1:57 on the clock. But the Huskies came back, tying the game at 17

to end the half.

"We just didn't shoot well in the first half," Head Coach Debbie Taylor said. "I thought we had good shots, but there seemed to be a lid on the basket."

Senior forward Kyra Kaylor managed only three points in the first half. Nevertheless, the Pittsburgh native sparked a 7-1 College spurt, starting the second half with a traditional three-point play.

With a 24-18 lead the Tribe began to control the pace of play, finding their rhythm in a high-scoring second half. When junior Courtney Portell netted a pair of foul shots, the Tribe held a 30-23 advantage and continued to push ahead.

The College took its greatest lead of the game at

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ALEX HAGLUND — THE FLAT HAT
Senior forward Devin James finished with 15 points.